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The Sign-Making Fantasy: Critique of the political economy of memory and imagination, Part IV ¹⁾

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Abstract

This article is the fourth (Part IV) of a series of six to eight parts. Alloying philosophy, psychoanalysis, and cultural studies, this series seeks to articulate a relationship between the essential nature of Western philosophy's metaphysical method of dialectics and the structure of memory in human beings. Covering Western philosophers from ancient to modern, such as Plato, Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger, Hegel, Lacan, Derrida, and Jakobson, and quoting social, cultural, and psychopathological materials such as *Sarashina Diary* (the daughter of Sugawara no Takasue in 11c Japan), *Funes the Memorious* (Jorge Luis Borges), *Norwegian Wood* (Haruki Murakami), *1984* (Apple Computer television commercial), autism spectrum disorder, late capitalism, and even the Quest Atlantis boom, this series endeavors to elucidate the nature of memory in the neurotypical (NT), i.e., the so-called normal, the majority of human beings. It is only in comparison with the so-called abnormal that the so-called normal can be defined. As a conclusion, the author elucidates that it is the being of 'the otherness' which always and already permeates the normal and stable working of memory, and it is that which frames the structure and content of the ego. In other words, the heteronomous nature of the capability of memory and imagination of typical developed individuals will be depicted.

In Part I, I traced the position of the imagination from Augustine to Descartes, and in Part II, its position in Kant and Heidegger. In Part III, I examined Hegel's theory of the imagination with precision. Hegel transforms the Kantian productive imagination into an imagination that makes "sign". In this Part IV, I will examine closely what "sign" and "mechanical memory" are in Hegel, and discuss the enigma of the synchronized function of "sign-making fantasy."

In Hegel, a "sign" is a symbol that has a meaning other than that indicated by its own sensory characteristics. Hegel gives examples of cap badges, flags, and tombstones, but in our

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time, one might cite the Apple trademark. Apple's apple symbol represents an apple, but the meaning it actually communicates to people is not "apple." While people see an apple there, they are reading another meaning into it. Hegel says the Egyptian pyramids are "sign." A famous and interesting statement by Hegel, which Derrida also draws attention to and discusses. Pyramid is a symbolic expression that excludes any human or natural form. Hegel highly values such "sign" representations because this is how man leaves the world of natural, sensible meaning and enters the world of meaning expressed only by the human language system. Hegel says that the world of "mechanical memory" is a meaningless/senseless dimension. It is called meaningless/senseless, but it is rather the world of the universal meaning system. Man enters this world of universal meaning through the power of "sign-making fantasy". For Hegel, "recall" and "memory" are different. Recall is the recall of sensible images, while memory is the world of meaning divorced from sensible images. Hegel does not clarify why the switch occurs from mere passive recall (the storage of mental images in "darkness") to active imagination (the power of fantasy to manipulate mental images at will, the light that illuminates the darkness). It just happens in Hegel. Furthermore, Hegel posits without reservation that fantasy is the reason that leads us into the world of general knowledge and general memory. He does not clarify the mechanism how individual fantasies become not an arbitrary and personal delusions, but general intelligence. In the next Part V, I will work on the riddle of "sign-making fantasy" and discuss the theoretical possibility of a "pseudo-synchronic circuit" that synchronizes our fantasies, using contemporary linguistics and psychology.

Key words: imagination; memory; Hegel; Derrida; sign; Philosophy of Mind; Enzyklopädie

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Gaining the ability to self-consciously recover and manipulate the generality and totality that pervades and becomes included in intuition and mental images from the beginning is referred to as intelligence, as it were. Fantasy is therefore not merely a private, arbitrary activity; the production of representations based upon fantasy is a necessary step to reach one's sociality. The products of fantasy are also certainly general and social. "Imagination, when regarded as the agency of this unification, is reason." [Hegel (Enz-III) 268. Japanese translation, p. 368.] Hegel's thinking of *imagination as reason* is unusual. There is a view that has been held since the Romantic period that imagination is a power that escapes rational thought. However, Hegel does not think so. He appears to think that our dreaming fantasies have already been pervaded by society and history. Such imagination then externalizes itself. "As reason, its [intelligence's] first start was to appropriate the immediate datum in itself, i.e., to universalize it, and now its action as reason is from the present point directed towards giving the character of an *existent* to what in it has been perfected to concrete auto-intuition. In other words, it aims at making itself *be* and be a *fact*. Acting on this view, it is *self-uttering, intuition-producing: the imagination which creates signs*." [Ibid. 267–68. Id., 368.] The expressions of these products of imagination external to the self are "signs" (*Zeichen*). Signs are the expressions by intelligence of itself as an intuitive existence. In other words, upon receiving intuition, intelligence stores it as mental imagery, retrieves it through reproductive imagination, and subsumes it into its own content through productive imagination; signs are what it then re-intuits and utters toward the exterior to express itself. Hegel states that these signs form mechanical memories.

(3) The encoding of representations into signs occurs through the above steps. This is "**memory**," which is the third stage of representation. As fantasies become increasingly more independent from the sensory characteristics of intuition, they become memories. Memories create signs (*Zeichen*) or become possible through the generation of signs. The function of imagination in the arts is expressing the generality created by intelligence still in the form of mental images as actually sensory existence; however, if intelligence externalizes as an existence the generality that intelligence itself has, the result will be signs. In other words, Hegel suggests that memories are what removes the concreteness from concrete images from the external world that have been obtained by intuition, filling them with meaningful content by the fantasies of intelligence, abstracts and verbalizes them and transforms them into a form organized as general information. He therefore distinguishes memory from recall, as recall refers to evoking concrete intuitive images. Before carefully considering Hegel's thoughts on memory, let us confirm what Hegel refers to when he discusses "signs". He states that signs are general representations liberated from the contents of mental images. They have obtained intuitive existence from arbitrarily selected sensory materials but have a meaning unrelated to those sensory materials. "Signs must be declared as a certain great thing. When intelligence converts a certain thing into a sign, it is divorced from the contents of intuition and grants the sensory materials a meaning *foreign* to the

sensory materials as its soul. Thus, for example, *cap badges* or *flags* or *tombstones* mean something that is completely different from what they directly and explicitly show. Here is represented the arbitrary nature of the bond between sensory materials and general ideas, and this arbitrariness has the essential conclusion that people must firstly learn the meaning of the signs. This particularly applies to linguistic signs.” [Ibid. 269. Id., 370.] The cap badges, flags, tombstones, and other items that Hegel lists as examples may be similar to symbol marks, to use a modern expression. Other examples include family crests and trademarks. “The crests of wild ginger (*Aoi no Gomon*)” is a reference to the crest of the Tokugawa shogun clan. This graphic symbol, known as the wild ginger trefoil, is an imitation of the visual form of the leaves of the wild ginger plant, converted into a crest. However, when this image is shown and used in communication, the wild ginger leaves that are the original meaning of the image don’t matter. When the crest is displayed, the person displaying the crest is not displaying wild ginger leaves, nor is the viewer looking at wild ginger leaves. To put it more accurately, they are looking at wild ginger leaves but not seeing them. The meaning received by the viewer at this time would be the power and authority of the Tokugawa clan. The meaning that they see while looking at wild ginger leaves is completely different from their intuitively demonstrative contents. A modern example is the use of the apple in the trademark of Apple Inc., a company from the United States. Apple’s apple mark is a well-known icon in global circulation, but Apple does not have history as an apple orchard or any relationship with the production or distribution of apples. Apple founder Steve Jobs’ reason for using an apple as the trademark of a company that develops and manufactures technology products was to create a sign. When people see this mark, they are looking at an apple but not seeing an apple. The apple itself is not at issue—the apple mark presents a different meaning. This is what Hegel seeks to describe when he discusses signs.²⁾

However, while Hegel mentions visual symbol marks as examples, he states that “linguistic signs” (*Sprachzeichen*) are a more appropriate example of signs. This could also be translated as “uttered expressions.” Hegel believes that spoken language has a higher level of abstraction as signs than does written language. If we move away from drawings and shift to the setting of linguistic expression, expressions that have a meaning that is completely different from the sensory materials’ original meaning could be described as “metonymy,” based on the metaphor/metonymy theory beginning with Roman Jakobson and Lacan. This is not what Hegel is discussing, however; the terms metaphor and metonymy belong to rhetoric, which may not be what Hegel was thinking about in this case. Instead, he intended to discuss communication in general using socially established abstract sign systems.³⁾ This is discussed later in this series, but in brief, from the perspective of twentieth-century linguistic philosophy, all linguistic acts can be considered figures of speech. Jakobson suggests analyzing utterances using positions on a spectrum between metaphor and metonymy, and he explains metaphoric expressions with similarity and metonymic expressions with contiguity.⁴⁾ Interestingly, when Hegel discusses memory, he contrasts languages closer to intuition (Eastern languages) and those closer to signs (Western languages). This contrast corresponds to that which exists between the metaphoric and metonymic characteristics of languages and will be discussed later.

In his writing, Hegel states that “the sign ... is a pyramid.” Shortly before this, he discussed tombstones as an example of symbol marks; this may seem strange but can be considered preparation for mentioning pyramids. “The *sign* is some immediate intuition, representing a totally different import from what naturally belongs to it; **it is the *pyramid* into which a foreign soul has been conveyed, and where it is conserved.** The *sign* is different from the *symbol*: for in the symbol the original characters (in essence and conception) of the visible object are more or less identical with the import which it bears as symbol; whereas in the sign, strictly so-called, the natural attributes of the intuition, and the connotation of which it is a sign, have nothing to do with each other. Intelligence therefore gives proof of wider choice and ampler authority in the use of intuitions when it treats them as *designatory* (significative) rather than as symbolical.” [Ibid. 270. Id., 371.] Hegel brings up pyramids because they are structures that adopt purely geometric shapes, consisting solely of planes and straight lines, and they are symbolic expressions that exclude the forms of people and natural objects. A disconnect exists between the externality of the expression medium and the internality of the significative contents. In his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel positions the pyramid as being in the process transitioning from symbolic art to abstract linguistic art. Considering this positioning, the pyramid is still a “symbol” and has not reached the stage of being a “sign.” However, Hegel considers the pyramid to have been designed as a way to send a message to others, rather than serving as a grave. “Of course, the pyramids had the objective of being used to bury kings and Apis, but such large structures were not necessary for this objective. Rather, they were constructed to amaze people and inspire worship.” [Hegel (VA-1820) 195. Japanese translation, pp. 177–78.] This simple exterior conceals the interior and remains silent. It conveys a message, but the message concealed inside is not known to others. *It conceals the interior and conveys only that an interior can be found there.* It is a medium that conveys only that conveys a message. In other words, it is a medium as a message. “The Pyramids put before our eyes the simple prototype of symbolical art itself; they are prodigious crystals which conceal in themselves an inner meaning and, as external shapes produced by art, they so envelop that meaning that it is obvious that they are there for this inner meaning separated from pure nature and only in relation to this meaning. But this realm of death and the invisible, which here constitutes the meaning, possesses only one side, and that a formal one, of the true content of art, namely that of being removed from immediate existence; and so this realm is primarily only Hades, not yet a life which, even if liberated from the sensuous as such, is still nevertheless at the same time self-existent and therefore in itself a free and living spirit. On this account the shape for such an inner meaning still remains just an external form and veil for the definite content of that meaning. The Pyramids are such an external environment in which an inner meaning rests concealed.” [Hegel (VA-I) 459–460. Id., 387–88.] Hegel considers the pyramids to be a great mystery that does not reveal its interior. “The works of Egyptian art in their mysterious symbolism are therefore riddles; the objective riddle par excellence.” [Ibid., 465. Id., 392.] Hegel regards the pyramids as symbols that pose riddles to those who look at them, then goes on to argue that their dark interior must be filled with the light of the spirit. Hegel argues that the essence of Egyptian art lies in its style of posing riddles as a form at this transition from symbolism to true art. However, this may also be

regarded as an overly self-serving assumption on Hegel's part. We are the ones who see the interior of the pyramids as *riddles* enclosed in the dark; for the contemporaneous Egyptians who constructed the pyramids, the pyramids were vessels filled with their spiritualism. Our inability to see their contents springs simply from the separation between our spirit and the spirit of the ancient Egyptians. Thinking this way should be common sense. The importance here, however, is Hegel's statement that "the sign ... is a pyramid." Although the pyramids were considered symbolic art in the *Lectures on Aesthetics*, here, in the "Philosophy of Spirit," Hegel describes them as something "into which a foreign [to the exterior] soul has been conveyed, and where it is conserved." He is saying that we may accept the pyramids, which should be symbols, as *signs*. Whose spirit is the light of the spirit that fills the dark interior of the pyramids in this case? Given that the Egyptians who constructed the pyramids are no longer alive, it can only be *us* as the people who accept the pyramids as "signs." Herein lies the greatest problem in Hegel's theory of signs. The sphinx, which Hegel claims best embodies the mysterious character of Egyptian symbolical art, was identified as a being that poses *riddles* to passing travelers. When Oedipus encountered a sphinx in Greek mythology, he heard a voice calling him to solve a riddle. Greek mythology informs us that the answer to the riddle was "man," and that Oedipus defeated the sphinx by giving that answer. No other person who had heard the riddle thought that they were being asked about *themselves*, so they were unable to answer it. It was the Greek hero Oedipus who was able to solve it. According to the myth, the man-eating sphinx has leaped to its death after its riddle was solved. Hegel mentions and praises Oedipus, who gave the answer of "man", as well as the wisdom of the motto "Know thyself," which was inscribed at the Temple of Delphi. "The explanation of the symbol lies in the absolute meaning, in the spirit, just as the famous Greek inscription calls to man: Know thyself. The light of consciousness is the clarity which makes its concrete content shine clearly through the shape belonging and appropriate to itself, and in its existence reveals itself alone." [Ibid., 466. Id., 392.]⁵⁾ According to Hegel's statements, the Egyptians should know the interior of their own spirit better. However, we do not know whether the ancient Egyptians were unaware of the interior of their own spirit or even what kind of interior they had because their spiritual lives are separate from ours. This was the lost spirit, and until the Rosetta stone was discovered (1799) and hieroglyphs began to be deciphered, it was considered a completely different, separate spirit, and the pyramids that tower over the desert and the sphinxes that stand beside them were a mystery. These must have been ruins, vestiges, and traces of unknown intention and significance that were left in the wilderness by so-called aliens who were entirely different beings. The Greek spirit that declared that the answer to the riddle is *man* must be considered terrifying. Hegel, who believed without doubt that the ruins left by the ancient Egyptians were works of art created by humans like himself, is truly a descendant of Oedipus, who attacked the sphinx by declaring that the answer to the riddle was man, in that both were convinced of the universality of humans. But was the *voice* that Oedipus heard truly the *voice* of the sphinx? Was it not Oedipus' own *voice*? The tale of Oedipus receiving a divine revelation from Apollo is a legend; however, Socrates of Athens later received a message from the same oracle at Delphi that "there is none wiser than Socrates." After receiving this pronouncement, Socrates is said to have made "Know thyself"

the cornerstone of his activities.

Hegel discussed the “sign-making fantasy” (*Zeichen machende Phantasie*). The sign-making fantasy is the power of intelligence to externalize itself and make itself an existence that can be intuitively perceived. However, at the same time, could that fantasy not function to understand the traces left by others, or in other words, the foreign symbols whose contents are unknowable as “signs,” or also function as a fantasy that makes signs from the traces? This means accepting others’ symbols as empty symbols, making signs from them, and then filling them with one’s own fantasies. This is the capability to repaint symbols and convert them into signs: that is, Hegel’s concept of intelligence. Of course, Hegel himself was not assuming this type of encounter with otherness when he discussed the sign-making fantasy. He was thinking within the space of “general self-consciousness.” Therefore, intelligence does nothing but accept its own content through signs that it creates itself. This assumes a cyclical self-identity. However, this assumption is called into question in us.

The last problem that remains in the process from Hegel’s theory of imagination to his theory of signs is “mechanical memory” (*mechanischen Gedächtnis*). According to Hegel, fantasy acquires its original intuitiveness through the generation of signs, but this form of existence is perfected in mechanical memory. Here, Hegel also asserts that memory as a mechanical activity is the activity of a *meaningless/senseless thing*. For the reader, this may seem strange. The activities of intelligence should have attained linguistic activity through signs filled by the spirit with its own content, but what does it mean that this is mechanical and the activity of a meaningless/senseless thing? Hegel considered this to be “thinking” (*Denken*). Noting the strangeness of this idea, Derrida first ridicules Heidegger’s romanticism of criticizing the arrival of the computer, while also having a high regard for Hegel’s ability to name the existence of a system that continually functions and operates without seeking meaning [Derrida (1972) 126–27. Japanese translation, vol. 1, 193–95]. Notably, however, the term for “meaningless/senseless” that Hegel uses here is *sinnlos* in German, which can also be understood in the meaning of without sense or non-intuitive. In other words, Hegel considers “memory” to be the series of signs that are divorced from their initial intuition and used within a meaning system unrelated to it. Of course, automation is considered within this. Equating this *automation* with the *identity* of spirit is characteristic of Hegel. While Hegel highly regards the automation of linguistic thought, he states that the spirit also faces the loss of its spirituality and risks alienation due to this automation. Even given this, intelligence can reach the dimension of thinking by reacquiring this as its own language. Hegel considers thinking within a network of concepts of the general spirit, separated from the individuality of sensory inputs from the external world experienced by individual subjects to be thinking (*Denken*), that is, the perfected form of intelligence. In this case, memory (*Gedächtnis*) would also have the nuance of “record” as it probably overlaps with the indication that something has been previously thought. To use a modern phrase, this access to general records could be considered participation in a general, social sign system that individuals acquire and accumulate during their development.⁶⁾

Interestingly, Hegel thinks it important to have voicing when participating in this sign system through mechanical memory. Intelligence connects to general memory through the medium of sound

and launches the movement of general memory. The first step in this, according to Hegel, is the internalization of the intuition of language. This could also be called the internalization of signs. Hegel's writings in this area (§460–64) are quite difficult to understand, possibly because Hegel is describing the developmental steps in structural terms. In other words, some parts are difficult to understand because they describe things experienced as participation process into a sign system as something we are already participating in. Given that the main text is written in structural terms and the addendum tends to add explanations in terms of development, when we follow Hegel's descriptions, Hegel himself may have been aware of this difficulty of understanding. To make our understanding as clear as possible, I will explain it in the context of developmental explanation here.

First, signs are internalized via the medium of sound. Hegel places importance on the dynamic factor of *reading aloud* when learning phonograms. To link the intuition of words, that is, the granted words (visible language) themselves, with the meaning content, Hegel believes that the words must pass via the intermediary of partly non-sensuous thing, sounds. Intelligence internalizes words by the intermediary of voice: that is, by reciting words aloud. The given visible language is associated with the content held by intelligence through vocalization and becomes representations. These representations accumulate and form a world of representations (*Reiche der Vorstellung*) as a system of names. (This is referred to as “name-holding memory.”) By now, recalling words at will from the series of names that have been accumulated in this way, recognizing *things themselves* becomes possible. In other words, a series or chain of names can be handled without replaying intuition and imagery together with each name (“reproductive memory”). Once this is possible, individuals have incorporated the signs into themselves. Conversely, Hegel even suggests that this association with names as incorporated signs is an assumption of the *self*. “The name, as giving an *existence* to the content in intelligence, is the *externality* of intelligence to itself; and the *inwardizing or recollection* of the name, i.e., of an intuition of intellectual origin, is at the same time a *self-externalization* to which intelligence reduces itself on its own ground. The association of the particular names [here] lies in the meaning of the features sensitive, representative, or cogitant, series of which the intelligence traverses as it feels, represents, or thinks.” [Hegel (Enz-III) 278. Japanese translation, p. 381.] Calling inwardizing externalization is a paradoxical expression that befits Hegel. This expression by Hegel is a little difficult to understand, but it should become clearer when imagining a consciousness on its way of development as a fusion of individual and general consciousness. By internalizing words through sound (oral recitation), general language enters the individual. For example, consider the stage when children acquire language by asking their parents the names of everything. This process of bringing general language into an individual is both an internalization by intelligence and an externalization/alienation. Externalization/alienation could be as general language entering the individual's consciousness from the outside, or as general language is leaving its generality and realizing its individual form within the individual. Thus, externalization in this context is doubled; Hegel often mentions this concept. The series of names incorporated and accumulated by sound here is still immersed in the individual sense of the intelligence. However, as the accumulation progresses, the series of names eventually loses meaning and transforms into mechanical

memory. Then, this mechanical memory conversely becomes the self. “This extreme recollection (inwardizing) of words undergoes a so-called transformation into the supreme self-divestment of intelligence. ... This extreme inwardizing of representation is the supreme self-divestment of intelligence, in which it renders itself the mere *being*, the universal space of names as such, i.e., of meaningless words. The ego, which is this abstract being, is, because subjectivity, at the same time the power over the different names, the *link* which, having nothing in itself, fixes in itself series of them and keeps them in stable order.” [Ibid., 280–81. Japanese translation, pp. 384–85.] Hegel refers to situations where people speak words they have learned by rote without intonation in a flat accent and says that this way of speaking that uses a mechanical association is *intelligent*. The Chinese language uses ideograms rather than phonograms for its written language (with the ideograms retaining intuitive meaning from their own origins); it is also spoken in such a way that intonation expresses meaning. This is poorly regarded by Hegel, who believed that accent grants meaning to words and destroys the mechanical succession. According to Hegel, if one does not break this mechanical succession and make it one’s own, the spirit has its wits about it (/is at home in itself). “The faculty of conning by rote series of words, with no principle governing their succession, or which are separately meaningless, e.g., a series of proper names, is so supremely marvelous, because it is the very essence of mind to *have its wits about it*; whereas in this case the mind is estranged *in itself*, and its action is like machinery (*Mechanismus*). But it is only as *uniting subjectivity with objectivity* that the mind *has its wits about it*. Whereas in the case before us, after it has in intuition been at first so external as to pick up its facts ready-made, and in representation inwardizes or recollects *this datum* and makes it its own—it proceeds as memory to make itself external in itself, so that what is its own assumes the guise of something found. Thus, one of the two dynamic factors of thought, namely, *objectivity*, is here put in intelligence itself as a quality of it. It is only a step further to treat memory as mechanical—the act implying no intelligence (/no sense).” [Ibid., 281–82. Japanese translation, pp. 385–86. Additions by the author are in parentheses.] Hegel says that the spirit is estranged but has its wits about it (/is at home in itself). Naturally, if we read this as a normal text, it is contradictory. This estrangement to the mechanical may be more easily understood if we include the findings of modern-day psychoanalysis or psychopathology while also understanding the concept as participating in the symbolic (*le symbolique*) through symbolic castration, to borrow Lacan’s words. *In other words, Hegel’s “memory” refers to the symbolic.* Incorporating language as an other into the self is estranging the self through the other. However, if one’s own thinking cannot be established without a language so acquired, the estrangement has already occurred when thinking begins, and there is no such thing as an unestranged self. In this sense, claiming that the acquisition of language is a primordial estrangement is a psychoanalytic perspective. It can be understood that Hegel tried to say this before Freud, and arrived at the seemingly contradictory expression above. His theories later moved toward the “objective spirit,” what would be referred to now as the social sciences. The subject that makes memory its own as machinery or is itself under mechanical memory, which traverses participation in the symbolic as the father language, now participates in social spaces as a social subject.



In this paper, we have provided an overview of Hegel's theories about imagination and signs, and memory.

Our investigation so far has been conducted as follows.

First, we referred to Augustine's theory of memory and found that memory was considered to be the most intimate interior: that is, what I should not have experienced but should remember, and what touches me in that form and stimulates and launches my memory and incites me toward what lies beyond memory. For Augustine, this is God, or, more specifically, Jesus Christ as the conduit to God or the Holy Spirit as contact from God. But if this were not God, we went on to ask, what are the memories about memory, i.e., the blank memory that incite us toward the mysteries of memory and urges us to be ego? We also traced the transformation of humans' ability to fantasize into the imagination to compose the recognition in modern philosophy. We saw that it originally existed outside of and before the establishment of the modern ego and is therefore a self-transcendent power that surpasses the ego. The modern ego can be considered the circuit that transforms the primordial imaginative that surpasses the ego (the pre-imagination) into the imagination that supports the ego. The composition of modern philosophy seeks to maintain this self-transcendent power as an ability that retraces a twisted route, springs from the self, and forms a space that the self grasps, taking a form similar to a Klein bottle. We then confirmed that this ability to surpass the self that springs forth in a space that the self grasps appears as the negative: that is, a four-dimensional nature that reveals itself in three-dimensional spaces. This is temporality, what Heidegger expressed as "the primordial temporality as pure self-affection." This expresses that solving the mystery of the establishment of temporality is the same as solving the mystery that I am I. However, saying that the ego is temporal *ab initio*, as Heidegger does, does not solve the puzzle. Primordial temporality as auto-affection is merely stating the obvious. The issue is revealing what kind of circuit assembly transforms the pre-imagination into the imagination. To determine hints on how to do this, we carefully examined the imagination theory in Hegel's "Philosophy of Spirit."

The imagination theory in Hegel's "Philosophy of Spirit" does not elucidate the secret of the establishment of this *imagination transformation circuit* itself because the chapter "Psychology. **Spirit**," to which imagination theory belongs, assumes that this circuit is already established and exclusively describes the operation of the circuit. However, Hegel's "Philosophy of Spirit" is characterized by describing the period *before and after the establishment* of the imagination transformation circuit in a form that can also be understood as spiritual evolution theory or developmental theory. "Anthropology. **Soul**," which was placed as a preliminary stage to psychology, considered supernatural phenomena. This chapter depicts the human soul in each stages, from gradually awakening from the animistic realm of dreams of its natural state, to the ego and withdrawing to the realm of phenomena experienced by the ego, and finally being established as self-consciousness. In the following chapter, "Phenomenology of

Spirit. **Consciousness**,” the human mind enters the realm composed by intellectual general language through various situations of mutual conflict and recognition. Then, when the mind becomes aware that the signs generated by its own fantasy already have the action of intelligence in general as the spirit, the description transitions from the “Subjective Spirit” to the “Objective Spirit,” with “Psychology. **Spirit**” as the final description. The mind then enters the realm of the spirit as general intelligence: that is, the dimension of the social components of the state and history. The descriptions at the each stage can be understood as a snapshot of each layer taken from a stack of layers of various dimensions of human activity. The progress of Hegel’s text includes descriptions that are difficult to read in terms of developmental theory. A similar trend is often highlighted in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807); while that is a separate work, the reasons for the transitions in each scene remain somewhat unsatisfactory for the reader, which is characteristic of Hegel’s descriptions. As noted above, Hegel writes in a way that subtly intersects structural and developmental theory descriptions. (In “Philosophy of Spirit,” the body consists of structural descriptions, but the addendum tends to be regarded as statements that can also be understood as supplements of developmental theory.⁷⁾) Those who seek to read the progress of the text in terms of developmental theory stumble at this point. However, this stumbling may in fact allow Hegel to be reread from a modern point of view. Under a favorable interpretation, Hegel could be considered to have left blank the parts that could not be explained with the knowledge of the time. Reading Hegel actively requires attention to the *gaps* in the text progression. The descriptions in “Psychology. **Spirit**” can be considered to reject a reading from the perspective of developmental theory in several situations, which *are* Hegel’s potential.

The first situation is the mystery of the situation where recollection changes into the power of imagination. The second is the mystery of the situation where signs made by a sign-making imagination/fantasy connect to the general recording of mechanical memory. The first could be renamed the issue of the double-leveling or shift change of imagination, while the second could be renamed the issue of the generalization of fantasy. These two elements combine to form the aforementioned “*imagination transformation circuit*”: that is, the circuit that transforms primordial imagination (strictly speaking, what came before imagination) into the imagination of the ego. Through this circuit, “that” from before imagination can be exhibited as the active, social ability exhibited by the spirit as general intelligence without deviation. Being active and being social are important. Without activeness, imagination is not imagination. All that remains would be the mind caught and tossed about by the attack of accumulated mental imagery. That is not an intellectual ego. And, without socialness, all that remains would be a mind that is engrossed in individual fantasy. Personal fantasies are not the manifestation of intelligence but isolated illusions with no route connecting them to the realm of the spirit. Today, we are able to consider the issue of the incompletely formed “imagination transformation circuit” in Hegel’s terms, using the problems of the impediments and difficulties that the ego encounters in modern society in the process of socialization of the self.⁸⁾ However, in Hegel’s imagination theory, recollection becomes imagination, and sign-making fantasy connects to general memory as a matter of course. Why would this be? This question has been brought up provisionally from time to time in the previous discussion,

but it can be posed again in summary as follows.

- (1) What causes recollection to change into the power of imagination? Hegel said that mental images are stored in the darkness. Initially, intuition brings light into the darkness, but over time, the spirit is able to illuminate and call forth images with the power of imagination, which is its own light. This is precisely the power of intelligence and is said to be the power of the ego as a “negating force.” Hegel describes the negative of intelligence as “concrete negativity”, as we see later. The power of this concrete negative is exactly what allows the ego to be the ego identical to the self. What is the source of this “power”? What is the origin of the light brought to the darkness of recollection?
- (2) Why can fantasies be fantasies as reason or general memory, not personal delusions? Why do the signs made by a sign-making fantasy not end up as personal signs? Signs are symbols that have had their initial meaning, which had a sensory origin, overwritten with another meaning. In that case, why can we see a sign made by another and recall the same content?

Hegel does not directly answer these questions in terms of developmental theory, but he does give indirect, structural answers. Judging from the structure of the writing in “Philosophy of Spirit,” the human spirit at the stage of “Psychology. **Spirit**” has already passed the stage of “Phenomenology of Mind. **Consciousness**,” so it has been generated in the state called general self-consciousness, reason, or theoretical spirit. For this reason, the products of imagination are always the products of general intelligence. There is no concern of being attacked by an uncontrollable uprising of recollection or of falling into a closed region of personal fantasy or idiosyncrasy, as is questioned in (1) and (2) above. The “spirit as intelligence” that Hegel describes is, to use Lacan’s term, an ego that has been completely symbolically castrated and socialized. But is such an ego possible? It is true that in “Phenomenology of Spirit,” consciousness became a consciousness that recognizes and is recognized by other consciousnesses. However, even considering our experience, this does not invite the state where various consciousnesses completely pervade each other and fall into perfect alignment. That is a theoretical construct that does not exist in reality. In fact, our mutual recognition exists only as a process conducted in our day-to-day lives. This arises as a problem particularly concerning imagination, where Hegel lays out his argument using the assumption that mutual recognition has already been attained. Are we able to bring our imaginative functions into alignment? Such as direct synchronization of the content of consciousness is impossible unless we suppose a state of group consciousness in which all human consciousness has been directly connected. However, we can think about a pseudo-synchronized state. For example, let us say that one human generated a unique, ad hoc “sign” and showed its “meaning” to the human in front of them for the first time. Given this, we could think that the other human could not normally generate in their consciousness the same fantasy that the creator incorporated into this sign. Even so, if we think carefully, this can occur in our social spaces. In discussing Hegel’s signs above, we raised the example of family crests and trademarks. “Signs” like these circulate in social spaces. We also know for a fact that if there is a shared venue or context, the meanings of signs are established and

communicated as the same thing. However, thinking more carefully, it is also conceivable that failures or errors in sharing meaning, or in other words, micro-level discommunications, occur from time to time. This is natural as long as our consciousnesses are not directly connected. Looking at it from another angle, if our consciousnesses were directly synchronized, signs would not be necessary as a medium. Accordingly, the problem is the mechanism to enable pseudo-synchronization. In other words, this means the ability to arbitrarily convert “symbols” left by others into “signs.” Others may have issued them as “signs” in their own way, perhaps. However, if our consciousnesses are not *directly* connected or aligned, in principle, signs are never anything more than symbols. That is to say, we cannot *directly* know the fantasies that others have imposed upon them. We can only fantasize about others’ fantasies using our own fantasies. People’s fantasies have the quality of interacting with each other in this form. However, this is essential pseudo-synchronization. The certainty that one is synchronized is a fallacy and a misunderstanding. Signs can be considered the products of a fantastic, imaginative identity in this sense. Fantastic identities constantly bear the potential for displacement. On the other hand, if there were no potential for displacement, that is, if perfect alignment were possible, signs would not be necessary in the first place. Therefore, signs are the identity of difference and identity and a dialectical product. Alternatively, we could conclude that the dialectic is generated precisely by signs that include such displacement.

Thus, by examining Hegel’s imagination theory, we have succeeded in extracting that the power of the human spirit called imagination includes the ingredient of sparking a pseudo-synchronizing action between one consciousness and another. This is the product of our close study of Hegel’s theory of the imagination. What this has confirmed is that *our memory is not mere recollection*. It contains a circuit for pseudo-aligning with others’ consciousnesses. Alternatively, as a more apt metaphor, the recollection circuit and the pseudo-aligning circuit may be adjacent in the structure of our consciousness, which causes them to influence each other. (For example, when configuring a transformer in an electrical circuit, the primary coil and the secondary coil are placed against each other. Although they are not connected, due to the principle of electromagnetic induction, when current flows through the primary coil, voltage is generated in the secondary coil according to the winding ratio and current flows. This is the image the author is thinking of here.) When the recollection circuit operates, the pseudo-aligning circuit may be affected and start up. This would manifest as *the desire to share recollections*. Alternatively, thinking about it from the opposite direction, we could examine whether the recollection circuit is excited when this pseudo-aligning circuit operates. At this time, would blank memories, memories without memory, or memories about memory not manifest? This probably contains the key to solving the mystery of “memory that launches memory” that Augustine experienced, which we considered at the beginning of this series.

Next, we will traverse Jakobson’s twentieth-century linguistic theory to separate and extract the essence of the pseudo-aligning circuit in the power of imagination. Hegel’s descriptions are not suited to this work of separation and extraction because of the limitations of time. However, before leaving these, let us also mention the issues of “voice” and “words” as media in Hegel.

(To be continued in *Part V*)

Notes

- 1) This article is based on “Memories of the Future: An Essay on the Origin of Philosophy and Hegel’s Imagination” from the general book *The Battlefield of Philosophy (Tetsugaku no senjou)*, edited by Seigen Nasu and Eiichi Nojiri, Kojinsha, 2018), with additions, revisions, and restructuring into a series for publication in this bulletin.
- 2) The postwar television period drama “Mito Kohmon” depicts a scene where an accompanying retainer holds up a seal case with the wild ginger crest on it and says loudly, “Do you not see this crest? The person here is the former vice-shogun, Lord Mito Mitsukuni, you know. Bow your heads! down your knees!,” showing the family crest. The way in which sign-based communication takes place through the combination of this crest and the voice is interesting. In addition, some say that the apple image was used as the trademark of Apple Inc. (formerly, Apple Computer, Inc.) in part because the founder, Steve Jobs, worked part-time at an apple orchard; regardless, using a fruit for the name and logo of a company that manufactured and developed electronic devices was an unusual idea at the time. Two anecdotes from historical times when the company fell into financial difficulty may be given to show how the company effectively used the symbolic nature of the apple mark, which was its trademark since its founding. The first concerns a television commercial that was broadcast when Steve Jobs himself produced and released the Macintosh, a new product that he staked the company’s future on in 1984. This commercial, produced by movie director Ridley Scott and lasting merely sixty seconds, is a milestone in advertising history; it depicts a dystopian near-future scene in monotone, then actor Edward Grover says in a voice-over, “On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you’ll see why 1984 won’t be like ‘1984’.” (The citation of ‘1984’ in the voice-over refers to George Orwell’s dystopian novel, *1984*.) After this, the screen fades to black and the rainbow-colored apple mark appears. The other anecdote relates to the “Think different” advertising campaign that was developed in 1997, again when the company was in financial difficulty and again under the leadership of Steve Jobs, who had returned as CEO. The 60-second television commercial version cited actual images in black and white of 17 symbolic people who were alive in the twentieth century (such as Albert Einstein, John Lennon, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr.) together with a voice-over; at the end, the screen faded to black and the words “Think different” appeared on the screen with the Apple logo in color. Posters with the logo and catch phrase alongside black-and-white photographs of the above great people from history were widely deployed. This advertising campaign is said to have had a marked effect in improving the company’s image and the image of its products; it is also considered a great success in advertising history. Several months after this advertising campaign began, Apple removed the rainbow color from its logo and reverted to a single-color silhouette of an apple. Both advertisements effectively promoted the existence of the company with a medium that shone

vibrant colored light on a monochrome image (a bleak vision of the future, historical memory) and “made a sign” from this connection by overlaying a voice-over or catch copy.

- 3) In the section “Of the Symbolic Form of Art” in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel states that the degree of distinction between meaning and expression in figures of speech increases in order from metaphor (*Metapher*) through image (*Bild*) to simile (*Gleichnis*) [Hegel (VA-I)]. As we move toward the latter, a discrepancy arises between the meaning that the representation itself originally had and the meaning that it transmits. In other words, the degree of conversion into a sign increases. In metaphors, the distinction between meaning and expression is potentially unclear, and the meaning contained in the image must be read from context. In other words, those expressions that strongly rely on the surrounding context to convey their message are metaphors. They are decorative expressions that emphasize the content of the meaning the author wishes to convey. In summary, they could be considered a decoration that is deliberately overlapped to emphasize the meaning in a condition in which the meaning would be understood even without the figurative expressions. We could also say that there is little self-awareness of the arbitrariness of the connection between meaning and expression. Moreover, this could be called a manner of communication that strongly relies on context in a setting where the linguistic act takes place. Images juxtapose the meaning and the expression with equal force. In other words, they are a parallel bond of two images. Hegel produces the example of a poem by Goethe that relates the tale of the life of Muhammad while relating images of springs, rivers, and seas. In scenes where this expressive technique is used, a more generalized understanding of context (an understanding of the convention that this poem that sings of natural scenery is talking about Muhammad overall in the first place) is required. In similes, the meaning and the expression are linked with a perfect awareness of the distinction between them. Hegel explains simile as an expression based on the desire “in the poet’s subjective imagination [that drives the poet, h]owever clearly he makes himself aware of the subject matter which he intends to express, however far he has brought this subject home to his mind in its more abstract universality and has expressed it to himself in this universality, ... to seek a concrete shape for the subject and to make perceptible to himself in a sensuous appearance the meaning already before his mind.” [Hegel (VA-I) 527. Japanese translation, vol. 1, p. 448] Accordingly, the meaning content expressed here is content already understood in general (the course of a certain love or a certain death), but similes are used when the poet wishes to express this with passion, adding the poet’s own subjective coloration. The distinction in series of metaphors, images, and similes that Hegel discusses is difficult to understand, but can be clarified by placing them on a spectrum that transitions from the superiority of subjective, individual contexts to the superiority of objective, general contexts. The transition toward the latter can be regarded as a shift of the expression and the meaning content toward adjacent contingency. This being the case, it can be regarded as a shift toward metonymy (a figurative expression based on contingent contiguity) in the sense expounded by Roman Jakobson. When seeking to understand Hegel through the filter of modern philosophy, simile and metonymy, which have different meaning in traditional rhetoric, can be understood as

overlapping. In fact, at the end of “The Symbolic Form of Art,” Hegel describes the shift in the symbolic form of art as a transition from affinity (*Verwandtschaft*, kinship) or similarity (*Ähnlichkeit*) between meaning and expressive form to a capricious relationship (*willkürliche Beziehung*) or arbitrariness (*Willkür*). This should correspond with Jakobson’s explanation of metaphor with similarity and of metonymy with contiguity. In other words, we can point out that “simile” in Hegel is explained with an emphasis on the aspect of its qualities that is close to “metonymy” in modern linguistic philosophy.

- 4) It seems obvious that the application of the terms “metaphor” and “metonymy” is reversed in the works of Jacobson and Lacan. This may be an obstacle to our efforts to apply Jacobson’s theory of aphasia to the interpretation of Hegel’s theory of signs. This discrepancy seems to be widespread, as many Lacanian interpreters have adopted Lacan’s usage as it is. This issue is important and will be addressed in more detail in the notes to a later paper in this series.
- 5) First, Hegel begins “Philosophy of Spirit” with “Know thyself” from the Oracle of Delphi. Furthermore, the artistic form suited to the content of the spirit as Hegel claims here is the art of language.
- 6) If this participation were to go badly in some form and a disorder arose in the connection between the imaginative ego and the mechanical memory, the ego would hear the mechanical memory as the voice of the other that echoes from within the self.
- 7) Researching from the perspective of text criticism also requires a distinction between texts written by Hegel himself and descriptions recorded by his students. This is not an important issue for discussions of the type conducted here, so we do not discuss it further here. See the article by Burkhard Tuschling in [*Hegel-Studien*. Bd. 26 (1991)], etc.
- 8) The “imagination transformation circuit” can be called the situation of symbolical castration, to use Lacan’s term. Calling it castration makes it sound like an event that can occur only once. In fact, in Lacan, the failure of castration is considered a cause of psychosis. However, Fredric Jameson, for example, regards the representational space composed by representational culture in the modern age as an expression of the functions of “the imaginary” and takes its operation as a subject of analysis, on the basis that it is an imaginary supplementation of contradictory experience in the real. Slavoj Žižek, who inherits Jameson’s theory to an extent, adopts the stance of regarding the representational space as symptoms.

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- * The original sources were referred to, if they were important to the discussion, and were listed in the order of source information, followed by information on the Japanese translation. Books where only the Japanese translation was referred to have been cited with information on the translated version first. Wherever the author has revised a translation, it is indicated.

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